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STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DUNCAN HUNTER

CHAIRMAN, MILITARY PROCUREMENT SUBCOMMITTEE
FULL COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1401
FY 00 DOD AUTHORIZATION BILL

The President's \$53 billion procurement budget request for fiscal year 2000 represents a decrease of \$1.1 billion below the amount forecast in fiscal year 1999, \$9.3 billion below the amount first forecast in fiscal year 1996, and continues the Department of Defense's delay in achieving the Joint Chiefs of Staff goal of a \$60.0 billion procurement budget by three years (from fiscal year 1998 to fiscal year 2001). Even before the initiation of Operation Allied Force the service chiefs of staff were lamenting a budget that leaves them far short of attaining their modernization requirements, despite Congress' having added over \$15 billion to the procurement accounts in the past four years. The ongoing campaign in the Balkans has only exacerbated this situation.

Although much has been touted by the Department concerning a major increase in its budget in the next six fiscal years, the procurement accounts are not the beneficiaries of any largesse. As noted above, the fiscal year 2000 procurement request actually declines from the amount forecast only one year ago. The cumulative addition to these accounts over the next four years is projected to be only \$4.1 billion—hardly a significant part of a proposed six-year \$84 billion overall increase.

Unfortunately, unless a sustained increase in procurement funding is forthcoming, the aging equipment situation will only get worse, as the impact of Operation Allied Force is felt. With the United States shouldering the largest share of the burden in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's air campaign against Yugoslavia, inventories of key precision weapons are being depleted at much faster rates than ever anticipated; units deployed for combat are stripping vital supplies from U.S.-based units, contributing to a dramatic drop in their readiness ratings; and cannibalization rates are climbing rapidly within deployed units because of spare parts shortages. Even with the substantial amount of additional funding provided by the Congress in fiscal year 1999 supplemental appropriations, the process of "getting well" from this ongoing operation will be slow and likely require substantial additional funding in the future.

Against this backdrop, yesterday the subcommittee marked up its part of H.R. 1401, and, for the fifth consecutive year, added funds to modernize the Department's weaponry.

Let me summarize the Subcommittee's mark:

- It adds \$2.6 Billion to the procurement request
- It adds \$327 Million to the R&D request for engineering and manufacturing development
- It adds \$80 Million to the National Defense Sealift Fund

Of these adds, over \$1.8 billion is for equipment on the Service Chiefs unfunded requirements lists and included in them is over \$700 million for precision munitions, such as the Tomahawk missile, and \$600 million for the National Guard and Reserve components.

The mark also approves multiyear procurement requests for the:

- F/A-18E/F Super Hornet
- Javelin anti-tank missile
- AH-64D Longbow Apache
- M2A3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle
- M 1 A2 Abrams Tank/Heavy Assault Bridge

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